



1 VIRGINIA STREET  
BRISTOL, VIRGINIA 24201

## THE FIRST WORD

August 2020

First Baptist Family,

Back towards the beginning of the year before any of us had ever heard of COVID-19, I presented an idea to the Board of Administration and Board of Deacons. They both gave their blessings. Now it's time to share that plan with the congregation, and for us to begin our first step. When I met with the BOA and Deacons, I told them that I wanted us as a congregation to put together a long-range strategic plan that examines the institutional, missional, and spiritual health of the church; a plan that imagines where we want the church to be in the year 2030, and a plan that forces us to put our goals on paper so we can work to achieve them together. The objective is for this plan to include measurable goals, a reasonable timeline, and estimated price tags for what we believe God is calling us to do. And I asked the BOA and the Deacons to select a group of 15 people to serve on this long-range planning team. Before we can do any of that, however, before people can be selected and work can begin, I believe it is vitally important that we as a congregation spend significant time in prayer. Because of that, we're going to be starting a 100-day prayer campaign as a congregation, and we're going to be starting it this August. The title of the prayer campaign is *Boldly Go*, and you're going to be hearing a lot about it moving forward. The basic premise is that everyone in the congregation will be encouraged to pray for the same thing every day for 100 days. As a staff, we've put together a prayer calendar that lists different items for you to pray for each day and for us to all pray for the same thing every Sunday of the campaign – that we have a united spirit and a bold faith. You'll notice that the prayer calendar begins with internal items and ends with external ones. That is intentional. The idea is that if we pray for and do the internal work we need to do as a congregation, then God will send us out to do Kingdom work together.

To help you in this prayer campaign, we've ordered everyone a white journal with the church's new logo on it for you to write down your thoughts and prayers. Kim Warren gave us a great deal on the journals and even threw in some nice pens as a gift to go with them. Additionally, we're putting together a packet that further explains the campaign. The packet also includes something you can use as a bookmark and it has questions to serve as prompts that can guide you through the campaign. For everyone who is able, we're asking that you come by the church on either Wednesday, July 29, or Friday, July 31, from 12-3 p.m. to pick up your journal, pen, and prayer campaign packet. We'll have a table set up in front of the breezeway, so you can remain in your car. And while we'll be masked and physically distanced, it will provide a great opportunity for us to see one another again. If you cannot come on either of those days, please let me know, and we'll find a way to get your journal to you.

The purpose of this prayer campaign is to enhance congregational unity prior to beginning any long-range plan and to provide space for God to stir our hearts and imaginations to what might be possible. We all have our own pet projects and priorities for the church. By starting with prayer, we can make sure we are following God's priorities rather than our own. Additionally, the prayer campaign allows us both to have a congregational focus when we're physically distanced from one another and it provides us a unifying force during an election year, a time that is naturally divisive. At the end of our *Boldly Go* campaign, I'll explain more about our next steps. In the meantime, I encourage to come by the church to pick up your prayer journal, continue to pray, and begin to ask God what God might be calling you to do individually and what God might be calling us to do as a congregation as we boldly go forward in faith together. Whatever the plan the selected team comes up with, it will only work if we remain united as a congregation, and prayer is the best way we can do that. Know that I am praying for all of you.

Grace and Peace,  
Kris



First Baptist Bristol Church readers,

A powerful little book by Beth Moore, *GET OUT of that PIT: Straight Talk about God's Deliverance from a Former Pit Dweller*, was recently donated to our library. Frankly, I wasn't expecting

much when I began this book; surprisingly however, I was hooked from the Introduction through the last chapter, *Our Pit-Less Future*. Although published in 2007, it has a lot to say to us who are in today's Covid "Pit," one we didn't choose to be in. In her upbeat often humorous manner, from her own experiences, and enlightened by her study of the scriptures, Moore describes life in a pit, one that you may have been thrown or slipped into. She

gives practical ways to get out of a pit, warns of the danger of making some human being responsible for your happiness, and describes what a pit-less life looks like. What better time than this to examine the pits we may have fallen or been tossed into and to look for the deliverance so graciously and freely offered by our God. You may request this or any item in the FBC Library by calling the church office or by email to [mtabor.1935@gmail.com](mailto:mtabor.1935@gmail.com).



### Notes from Leigh...

Recently I have started listening to Podcasts. I know... they have been around for a while, so I am a bit behind. But I got a Bluetooth headset that works well so I can listen while I walk, run, or even while mowing the grass! I have several "go-to" authors – Beth Moore, Jennie Allen, Margaret

Feinstein, Priscilla Shirer, and Crystal Hurst – to name a few.

While I am a much better in-person learner, I have found that I can listen and glean some important insights and gain knowledge that is very useful to my everyday walk with Christ. I still must do the heavy lifting of study and prayer, but the time I spend listening is uplifting and encouraging. And, during this time of Pandemic and isolation, I believe anything that we can do that draws us nearer to God and out of the chaos of this world, is worth doing.

I would encourage you to find some ways to turn off the "noise" and to turn

on some good, uplifting messages of hope!

I am so excited that Rob and Kim Griswell-Lowry have come our way! Rob is doing a marvelous job on the organ, and I am thrilled that they are adding their beautiful voices to our sanctuary choir. Meeting them and getting to know them is made more difficult because of COVID. However, I hope that you will find a way to welcome them to our church and community.

Blessings and Love,  
Leigh

### FBC SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

One of the big needs in our community during this time of pandemic is directly related to food insecurity. Because of that, we are working on putting together service teams that will allow people to serve their neighbors in socially responsible ways. Some of these opportunities to serve include:

**-Food Pantry:** Currently, the food pantry in the Ministry Mall is open on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 1-4 p.m.

Several churches are providing volunteer teams. This is currently one of our more pressing needs. If you are interested in volunteering at the food pantry as part of the First Baptist team,

please contact Kris Aaron at 803-225-0795.

**-Meals on Wheels:** First Baptist delivers meals through the Meals on Wheels program on the fourth Thursday of every month. If you would like more information about helping with Meals on Wheels, please contact Stephanie Elliott at 423-646-7280.

**-Weekly Soup Delivery:** First Baptist delivers soup to shut-ins weekly. If you are interested in delivering soup and would like more information, please contact Leroy Doran at 423-612-4204.

**-Blessing Box:** Jerry Sorrell built a Blessing Box for the church. It is placed by the tree where we tie hats and gloves

in the winter. This is a place to put canned goods and hygiene products for those in need. Members are encouraged to keep our box stocked to help our neighbors. For more information, please contact Kris Aaron at 803-225-0795.

Being mindful of our own individual health and loving our neighbors are not mutually exclusive. We can practice physical distancing, wash our hands, exercise good judgment regarding our health, and continue to fulfill our mission as a church. People remember who was there for them in a time of crisis, and this pandemic provides us a wonderful opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ in our own community. As different opportunities arise, I'll be sure to let you know. Stay well.



## First Baptist Bristol Church Apparel for Sale

T-Shirts (Long & Short  
Sleeve), Hats, Performance  
Polos, and Hoodies

Check the FBC website for the order form, or call the church office.

Select items you wish to purchase from the order form.

Pre-pay order, check payable to:  
First Baptist Church  
One Virginia Street  
Bristol, Virginia 24201

**Order Deadline is August 5, 2020**

### Online ZOOM Meetings

Board of Administration Meeting on August 17 at 5 p.m.  
Deacons' Meeting on August 17 at 7 p.m.

Sunday School (weekly) at 10 a.m.  
Monday Morning Coffee Klatsch (weekly) at 10 a.m.



### APPRECIATION

#### THANK YOU FROM OUR FAMILY

First and foremost, we want to express how much we appreciate the care and love with which our Pastor carried out the service for our Mother, Sarah Treadwell Harris. He had us crying and laughing, and loving and remembering her with so much compassion in God's holding hands. We couldn't have done it without him.

We also want to thank Harry and the committee in the church for the lovely Olive Garden dinner they provided us. We had a large family gathering and all that luscious food was devoured. As they say, it does a body good, but it also did the heart good too.

Mother loved First Baptist Church and had missed being able to attend for so long. We appreciate the deacons and Ben, who visited with her often as did of course Kris. She looked forward to Communion at Brookdale too.

Mother had so many friends in that church, and we have received so very many calls and condolences. We thank each and everyone of you for caring for her now as you did for many, many years.

In Christ,

Penny and John Strickland and Family  
Randy and Sherry Treadwell and Family

## FBC Youth News!!!

### Youth Camp Alternate 2020

- This is another project the youth ministry is taking head on!!! We are working on several possibilities that will adjust to our current world situation. Remember, the safety of our youth and families is our first concern, and we are praying and working through this Summer to re-create youth ministry.

### Urgent Requests from the Mission Team

We have decided not to participate in the Christmas in July program sponsored by Communities in the Schools. Instead, we are asking you to shop for school supplies which will be delivered to two local schools and food for the Blessing Box. If a Sunday School class or individuals adopted a student last year please spend that amount of money shopping for the two projects mentioned above. However, many smaller donations will be needed to adequately meet these needs. There will be boxes for the school supplies placed near the breezeway door. Remember to call before coming to the church. Schools may be opening in August. So, shop as soon as possible.

Thank you ahead of time for your generosity.



Tim and I want to thank you for the gift sent to us last month. We were able to use that amount to pay someone to help us clean out the bats and their mess from our ceiling. This was a problem for over a year and we were concerned for our health. We were also able to give an offering to two of our staff members here at the mission who are severely under supported. These are tough times for people depending on support to remain in the ministry. We were very happy to share the blessing with these two families.

Thank you so much for your faithfulness to give and to support through prayer.

For His Kingdom,  
*Tim and Tammy Evans*  
Evangelical Alliance Mission of Brazil

## *Our Staff*

Dr. Kris Aaron  
Rev. Ben Ondrak  
Mrs. Jackie Burnette  
Rev. Leigh Clark

Senior Pastor  
Associate Pastor  
Pianist  
Minister of Music

Mr. Dennis Thomas  
Mrs. Marcine Robinette  
Ms. Terri Thomas  
  
Ms. LaVerne Brown

Sexton  
Parish Nurse  
Church Administrator  
and Financial Secretary  
Administrative Assistant



**Church Phone : 276.669.8191**

Fax: 276.669.5082

Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

E-mail: [info@fbcbristol.org](mailto:info@fbcbristol.org)

Website: [www.fbcbristol.org](http://www.fbcbristol.org)

### **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

1 Virginia Street  
P.O. Box 116  
Bristol, VA 24203

#### **FBC Minister On-Call Schedule**

August 1 - 2	Dr. Kris Aaron, 803-225-0795
August 8 - 9	Rev. Ben Ondrak, 423-217-8934
August 15 - 16	Dr. Kris Aaron, 803-225-0795
August 22 - 23	Dr. Kris Aaron, 803-225-0795
August 29 - 30	Ms. Terri Thomas, 423-963-7576

#### **Deacon of the Week for August**

August 2 - Jerry Sorrell  
August 9 - Nelson Gwaltney  
August 16 - Harry Scanlan  
August 23 - Brad Talbert  
August 30 - Mike Warren